

Connections

July 2011

Commission Adopts Plan to Make MoDOT Smaller

Reduction in Staff, Facilities and Equipment Will Save \$512 Million

by Linda Wilson

The date of June 8, 2011, marked a historic day for MoDOT. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission adopted a plan that will make MoDOT a smaller agency so more funding can be directed to needed road and bridge projects.

In a resolution, the six commission members adopted a plan that calls for reducing MoDOT's staff size by 1,200, closing 131 facilities and selling more than 740 pieces of equipment. By 2015, the plan - called the Bolder Five-Year Direction - will save \$512 million that will be used for vital road and bridge projects. The plan began immediately following the action and will have full implementation of buildings and equipment by December 2012 and of personnel by March 30, 2013.

"We held 115 community briefings on the Bolder Five-Year Direction throughout the state in the last month and thousands of Missourians voiced their opinions on our plan of action," said Commission Chair

Grace Nichols. "We considered each and every comment and recommendation and incorporated the changes. The plan was certainly improved by the public participation. We feel strongly that the move to make MoDOT smaller was the right direction to head."

For the past several years, state transportation officials have been warning that Missouri was headed for a transportation funding crisis. Faced with a construction program that has been cut in half and the expected inability to match federal funds in the future, the commission asked MoDOT Director Kevin Keith to develop a plan to become the right size to serve customers.

"This is the most important decision we will make as we serve on this commission and we have all approached this with that importance," said Commission Member

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Devastation in Joplin

by Lori Marble, Wendy Brunner-Lewis and Bob Edwards

Across the nation and the world thousands of people have viewed footage of Joplin's tornado devastation. The death toll now stands at 151 (as of June 9), making this the deadliest tornado since modern recordkeeping. The number of injured is over 1,150 people.

The EF-5 tornado, with wind speeds over 200 mph, developed directly over Joplin's west side at 5:41 p.m., Sunday, May 22. The Joplin tornado was ¾ mile wide, the equivalent of 13 football fields laid end to end, and had a track lasting six miles. Re-

ports stated that FEMA had close to 7,800 households register with their agency, with more than 6,100 reporting damage to their homes.

Employees weren't sure if the district office was even still standing since the damage line was just a few blocks from the building, but responding immediately to the office were District Engineer Becky Baltz, Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton; Incident Management Coordinator Kristi Bachman and Safety & Health Manager Gary Clinton; Assistant District Engineer Dan Salisbury, Maintenance Superintendents Tim Houdyshell and Tim Rice, Senior Electrician Floyd Cook and several nearby maintenance crew members.

"People reported immediately," Baltz said. "It's a particularly gratifying part of MoDOT's culture."

The first thing District 8 Incident Management Coordinator Earl Wallace noticed on his way to Joplin to help the district was "a never-ending stream of ambulances" leaving Joplin, including trucks on the ground and helicopters in the air.

Republic Maintenance Supervisor Bret Hicks, also heading to Joplin on I-44 that night, took note of the many power lines down across the road and tractor-trailer rigs lying along ditches, in the median and on the road itself. The westbound lane of traffic on I-44 was closed until the next morning due to 12 overturned semi-tractors between mile markers 11-12.

In addition to the debris and destructive power of the tornado winds, Hicks was struck by the utter darkness. He recalled

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Kansas City District Signal Crew Maintenance Worker Eddie Neil, left, and Senior Maintenance Worker Keith Rush wire LED lenses into a signal head assembly at 20th Street and Davis Avenue.

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Taking the Challenge!
MoDOT employees in D2 get the best value for every dollar on minor roads

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Earthquake exercise scenarios keep D3 employees on their toes

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D5 could see its first diverging diamond interchange in Columbia

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D7 employees and retirees share their stories from the May 22 tornado

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Project Success
Rehabilitation of 10 miles of I-44 in D9 is appreciated by the public, media and officials

Stephen Miller. “We have an obligation to do what we have to do given our responsibilities. These times require sacrifice. It is a shared burden across the state.”

The changes are necessary to save money to put back into road and bridge projects. “We face a great decrease in federal funding,” said Commission Member Ken Suelthaus. “We are trying to put more than \$500 million back on the roadways in five years and then \$100 million every year after that. In ten years, that is nearly \$1 billion. We have to have a starting place and that is today.”

The final plan calls for MoDOT to retain a significant presence in the three areas where the department will close district offices: Joplin, Macon and Willow Springs. About 70 to 80 employees will remain in each of those areas under the direction of an area engineer who will lead a team of engineering, operations, maintenance and support staff. The remaining complexes in the three locations will be called district regional offices.

“It is my opinion that when we need something, the area engineer is the person we turn to,” said Commission Vice-Chairman Rudy Farber. “The area engineer is the local point of contact. I know I personally rarely went to the Joplin office before I was a commissioner. I can rely on the area engineer to serve the immediate needs of my community.”

During the presentation to the MHTC, Director Keith discussed the public’s concerns about change in service. The revised plan approved by the MHTC kept open four additional maintenance buildings than the original reduction plan. “We plan to go through this winter and see how this works,” said Keith.

“It is a somewhat flexible process. We need to reduce overall, but we may find that there may be a spot or two where we need to keep a salt facility.”

“This plan will continue to develop as we move forward with the focus on how do we set up MoDOT for the future and have the least impact on delivering services to customers,” Keith said.

In the days immediately following the MHTC approval, MoDOT Senior Management Team District Engineers and Division Leaders and their assistants were named. The competitive process began for the District and Division management leadership in salary grades 17-20. The overall selection of employees throughout MoDOT will be an ongoing process.

“We have chosen to reduce our employee numbers in a more challenging fashion. Extending the employee reduction deadline and using attrition allows us to lay off fewer employees. But, we won’t know until we work our way through the process, how each employee is impacted since we don’t know who is going to leave” said MoDOT Human Resources Director Micki Knudsen. “I know it creates more anxiety. But, it’s the right thing to do to have the smallest amount of layoffs.”

The direction for MoDOT has now been set and the implementation has begun to create a new MoDOT with the right people in the right places to better service the roads and bridges of the state. “I want to commend the commission for taking thoughtful and decisive action on our plan to become a smaller agency,” said Keith. “The process hasn’t been easy, and their decision was a difficult one. But it’s a step that must be taken. We owe it to Missourians to make the best use of the resources we’re given, and this plan puts us on the right path to do just that.”

Quite Frankly

Now that the Commission has approved the Bolder Five-Year Direction, we’re moving forward. The process has begun to place the right employees in the right positions for a better, stronger MoDOT.

New district boundaries are in effect, and a new Senior Management Team is in place. You can view the new map and team with the Bolder Five-Year Direction materials on the Intranet or Sharepoint.

While the boundary lines have changed, our commitment to customers remains the same. One way we’ll provide a personal, local connection to com-



munities is by expanding the role and responsibilities of area engineers across the state. They will be empowered to make critical decisions to address local transportation issues.

So what’s next? The next level of management teams, as well as the area engineers, is scheduled to be in place by Sept. 15, 2011. District offices are already working on plans to consolidate buildings prior to the first snowfall and identifying equipment that can be shared or sold.

This is a challenging time, but also a unique opportunity. For the first time in MoDOT’s history, we have the chance to truly start fresh and structure MoDOT to best serve Missourians.

In the meantime, stay focused and flexible.

Kevin

Summary of the Bolder Five-Year Direction June 8, 2011

Reduce employees by 1,200 with the deadline extended to March 31, 2013

- 403 employees reduced since March 2010 with the remaining 793 to be reduced by March 2013 (19 percent overall reduction)

Reduce from 10 district offices to seven

- New district boundaries have been adjusted to better balance MoDOT’s workload and coordinate with regional planning commission boundaries.

Close 131 facilities statewide including

- Three district offices at Joplin, Macon and Willow Springs
- 107 maintenance facilities
- 17 Resident Engineer offices
- Four leased facilities

Reduce 740 pieces of equipment

New Solar Light Will be Off the Grid

by Melissa Black

Solar energy will be used for the first time ever by MoDOT to power an overhead LED roadway light at an intersection in District 2, and it’s completely off the grid, which adds up to reducing energy usage and costs.

“Using solar energy where we can instead of electricity is more environmentally friendly,” says Julie Stotlemeyer, MoDOT Traffic liaison engineer. “This light is completely off the grid, and may be something we can install in other areas of the state that could lead to using less energy and saving money.”

According to Stotlemeyer, the industry is just now providing the technology capable of using LEDs for roadway lighting. LEDs, or light-emitting diodes,

are a light source used as lamps in many devices, and are increasingly used for lighting because of their long life, low energy usage and less carbon dioxide emissions over other lighting. By combining solar power with an LED light, MoDOT is hoping for longer light life, energy savings, instant on and off power lighting, and better performance in colder weather than traditional lighting.

“District 2 had an ideal location to test the new solar light,” Stotlemeyer says. “They had an intersection where it would have incurred considerable cost to bring in electric power, so the solar panels seemed like a great alternative.” Solar lighting isn’t free, however, MoDOT still has to pay for the batteries and panels, but in the long run, costs



are expected to be cheaper than using electricity.

Installation of the solar panels and other equipment is weather dependent, but the district is hoping to get all the equipment installed and ready to go in March.

“Once everything is installed at this location, we can evaluate the light for its brightness and effectiveness, and consider its use elsewhere around the state,” Stotlemeyer says.

Bolder Five-Year Direction: Frequently Asked Questions

You knew this drop in funding was coming. Why didn't you do something about it sooner?

We have worked very hard to make wise use of the resources we're given. Last year, we put in place our new Five-Year Direction to address the funding crisis and reduce costs in an effort to put more funding toward road and bridge projects. We have been talking about the decline in funding for transportation for many years, but there is very little public interest at this time for increasing funding for transportation. And it is not up to us to determine how transportation in Missouri is funded and at what level. That responsibility lies with our elected officials and Missourians.

Will I notice a difference in services from MoDOT?

The Bolder Five-Year Direction does not change our commitment to be the same responsive and responsible organization. We will continue to provide outstanding customer service and focus on priorities. Our mission remains the same but with a stronger focus on maintaining the system. Actually, without this bolder approach - which enables us to direct more resources toward roads and bridges - Missourians would notice an even bigger drop in construction projects.

How will funding for projects be impacted?

The current, five-year construction plan called the State Transportation Improvement Program is not impacted by this bolder approach. MoDOT and the Commission remain committed to deliver projects identified in the STIP.

However, as we move past the current construction program, each community will see fewer projects that make the roads safer, create jobs, reduce congestion and help communities grow.

What will MoDOT do with its cost savings – where will the money be spent?

The savings from the Bolder Five-Year Direction will be spent on maintaining the state's roads and bridges.

Will the additional savings be redirected in accordance with the current planning formula? Yes. MoDOT will redistribute the extensive cost savings generated by this plan through the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission's existing formula.

Why did you change the district boundaries again? Some districts got even bigger, and St. Louis returned to its previous shape.

We had a lot of feedback about the new seven-district MoDOT configuration. Some counties wanted to remain together because of previous relationships as part of a particular regional planning commission, and in the originally proposed configuration they were split up. When we looked at some of the suggested realigned districts, we found that we were better able to balance our work load with this newer configuration. Now, none of the state's RPCs are bisected by one of our districts. That will help us better coordinate our efforts with the RPCs.

How was the decision made to reduce the number of maintenance sheds?

How were the ones chosen to be closed?

MoDOT has been reducing mainte-

nance buildings for several years. Over the past eight years, 85 buildings have been closed and consolidated with other buildings. When we developed the proposed list of closures, we asked ourselves two questions: which ones are strategically located to provide the best customer service and, if we had to maintain only one facility per county, which one would it be? Then we looked at other things like the size and age of the facility, the number of employees and the proximity to other buildings. Many of the facilities that are being closed have four or fewer employees located at them and have to combine daily with other facilities to be able to get work done. That's just not efficient – you can't do a lot of work with just four people. The district engineers and their staff helped determine this list. The 174 facilities that will remain are strategically located to be able to provide good service to all parts of the state with a presence in every county. Local district managers were consulted to help determine the final locations of these facilities.

Since the original list of closures was proposed on May 4, we have taken a second look at the list based on the feedback we received from the public and others. We ultimately decided to keep four open that previously were on the list for closure.

How will the economic impact of closing a district office be addressed?

We will still have a very significant presence in Macon, Joplin and Willow Springs.

We'll have 70-80 people in those locations in leadership and management, engineering, maintenance and administrative support. Plus, we'll be saving \$512 million that we will be able to direct to road and bridge projects.

What strategies will you put in place to help ensure that MoDOT is an equal opportunity employer? How

will MoDOT maintain diversity and inclusion through this process?

MoDOT remains committed to diversity both internally and with its consultants and contractors. With no external hiring, our focus will shift from recruiting to retention. The department has selected an advisory council of external experts to identify specific strategies to implement.

What will happen if a tax increase is passed before the department reaches its employee reduction levels? This plan is about making MoDOT the right size and structure for delivering transportation services to the people of Missouri – regardless of funding levels. If more dollars are directed to transportation, we will be ready to deliver transportation improvements quickly and efficiently using our transportation industry partners.

Will you have layoffs?

Yes. We are committed to reducing our number of employees through attrition and transfers, but layoffs could be necessary. However, layoffs will be the last step and extending the implementation deadline to March 31, 2013 may minimize the number of layoffs that might be required.

Is the department still hiring new employees?

No. The department has implemented a freeze on all external hiring.

If you do this, how will this rank us nationally?

Currently we are ranked 28th among DOTs in terms of employees per lane mile. By reducing our staff by 1,200, we move up four places to 24th. Currently, we have one employee per 11.9 lane miles and after March 31, 2013, we will have one employee per 14.2 lane miles.

Find more FAQ's with the Bolder Five-year Direction materials on the Intranet or Sharepoint.

How Do the New Districts Compare?

District	Population	Lane Miles	Vehicle Miles Traveled	Square Feet Bridge Deck	Average Annual STIP Funding	No. of Employees
Northwest	280,638	11,381	7,878,369	8,819,906	\$33,000,000	480
Northeast	292,863	9,674	8,335,741	5,869,936	\$28,300,000	437
Kansas City	1,259,938	7,740	24,038,847	17,235,772	\$103,400,000	636
Central	652,456	11,358	17,093,946	7,760,236	\$54,200,000	595
St. Louis	1,998,958	5,671	36,264,784	20,377,760	\$158,500,000	726
Southwest	926,656	14,483	21,813,633	11,234,342	\$72,100,000	754
Southeast	577,418	15,950	15,202,262	10,327,062	\$53,500,000	706
Central Office						772
Statewide Interstate/Major Bridge Projects					\$99,000,000	

Battle of the Belt Gets Ford Teammate

by Sandra Hentges

MoDOT's Battle of the Belt project slated for this fall in Missouri high schools is getting a new teammate – Ford Motor Company. Ford's Driving Skills for Life recently awarded \$20,000 worth of iTunes gift cards to the department to be used as an incentive item for schools that participate in the competition.

Missouri high schools are invited to compete in the annual Battle of the Belt

Challenge from Oct. 3 to Nov. 11. The challenge provides schools an opportunity to compete and win cash and prizes for their schools while increasing teen seat belt use.

"In addition to using the iTunes cards as incentive items, we will partner with Ford to develop some kickoff events at their dealerships," said Carrie Wolken,

youth coordinator for the Division of Highway Safety.

Young drivers are overrepresented in crashes both nationwide and in Missouri. Of all 2009 Missouri traffic crashes, 24 percent involved a young driver (under age 21). Of all fatal traffic crashes, 17 percent involved a young driver. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for people 15-20 years old.

According to the results of the 2010

Missouri seat belt survey, teen seat belt use is at 66 percent. Unfortunately, that means 34 percent of teens still aren't wearing their seat belts and are at a greater risk of getting injured or killed in traffic crashes.

Three other states received grants from Ford for various teen safe-driving projects, including Maine, New York and Massachusetts.

For more information on Battle of the Belt visit www.saveMOLives.com.

Devastation in Joplin
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looking across the landscape and seeing no lights where they should have been shining from nearby farms. "It was an eerie feeling."

District 7 management immediately began the process of gathering information on employees impacted by the storm. There were seven District 7 employees who experienced a total loss of homes and belongings. One employee was injured and hospitalized. Numerous employees or their immediate families experienced significant damage to their homes or vehicles. But throughout all the devastation, District 7 was blessed to not lose any employees.

Inside the tornado impact zone, structures were reduced to splinters. Whittled down to points, resembling sharpened pencils were various utility poles, their lines twisted and looped across streets and around overturned



Central Office Traffic Communication Coordinator John Diggs installs a portable, solar-powered camera system also used to power traffic signals at 26th and Maiden Lane.

cars. Bark was stripped from trees and the smell of natural gas hung heavy in the humid air.

Gone were the signals from intersections. Gone were the street signs that once designated busy intersections and neighborhood boundaries. Gone were the visual cues of billboards and businesses that once indicated major retail sections of town.

District 7 construction personnel assisted with coordination of volunteer contractor efforts. Steve Campbell, District 7 Resident Engineer, recounts that in the first two weeks following the tornado, over 140 volunteer groups and 1,000 pieces of equipment were logged and utilized.

Construction personnel also went throughout the tornado zone painting street names on the pavement in an attempt to assist disoriented motorists, while maintenance employees cleared city and state streets of debris.

As power was restored and streets and roads were opened over the next few days, traffic control became crucial. District 8 Signing and Signal crews were called in to help District 7 crews

repair and replace signs and signals.

Baltz said initially it was hard not to bring in every resource MoDOT owns to help the City of Joplin clear debris. "We had to be careful at first because of the search and rescue efforts being made. Plus, the city had a plan for how they wanted this handled. Everybody in MoDOT wanted to come help us, and it was tough to tell them not yet."

All districts provided supplies and personnel to the official response to the storm, while the outpouring of support from the MoDOT family to take care of their own was just as strong.

District 7 Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton was philosophical regarding the experience. "Through the initial response, it was at times overwhelming to grasp the enormity of the situation. We met each request from the City of Joplin with the mindset 'We're here to help. Whatever we can do, we're going to do.'"

Missourians Get Dirty to Clean Up Litter

by Melissa Black

Thousands of Missourians across the state got dirty this April to help clean up roadsides, streams and neighborhoods as part of the 2011 No MOre Trash! Bash, and by working together, made it one of the most successful events in its history.

The numbers are in and this year's Bash was better than ever with 157,681 bags of trash collected throughout Missouri, almost 30,000 more bags than last year. The No MOre Trash! Bash is a month-long litter-prevention celebration held every April that encourages people to clean up Missouri's roads and streams.

Cleanup crews included Adopt-A-Highway and Sponsor-A-Highway, MoDOT, Missouri Department of Conservation Stream Teams, inmates and countless other individuals and groups throughout the state.

"Since we began the litter Bash, we have continued to see an increase in the amount of participation and trash collected each year which we really appreciate," says Stacy Armstrong, MoDOT statewide Adopt-A-Highway coordinator. "By educating others about not littering and working together,

we continue to work toward having a litter-free Missouri."

MoDOT districts held numerous educational events, cleanups, news conferences, sent news releases, and participated in social media, radio and TV interviews to spread the word about getting rid of litter and encouraging the public to take part in the Bash.

Although all districts showed tremendous efforts this year, a few districts were noticed for specific reasons:

- District 4 led the way with the most bags of litter picked up by MoDOT personnel - 10,689

- District 6 had the most bags picked up by Adopt-A-Highway volunteers 3,788
- District 9 had the most bags picked up by the incarcerated crews – 10,655

"Thanks to all our employees who worked hard to make the Bash a success this year, either by actually cleaning up, helping out with events or organizing staff – it all makes a difference," Armstrong says.

For more information about the No MOre Trash! Bash and how you can volunteer, visit nomoretrash.org. Imagine a litter-free Missouri...No MOre Trash!

July Service Anniversaries

35 Years		Eric D. Deschamp	D4
William D. Iddings	D1	Mark A. Smith	D4
Clifford D. Palmer	D2	Brian N. Kidwell	D4
Robert E. Schwab	CO	Michael D. Schillers	D5
30 Years		Linda S. Wilson	D6
James P. Sanders	CO	David D. White	D6
25 Years		Teddy J. Earls	D8
Roy E. Forbes	D2	Peggy Covington	CO
Todd E. Greenstreet	D2	15 Years	
William J. Griffin	D2	Joyce M. Reynolds	D1
April A. Fohey	D3	Steven J. Frank	D1
Duane S. Huyser	D5	Samuel R. Stockdall	D2
Alvin L. Wolfe	D5	Joseph B. McNeill	D3
Carol J. Davenport	D5	Steven R. Elrick	D4
Thomas G. McCloskey	D6	Pedro Chaidez	D5
Stanley L. Hicks	D7	Shannon L. Haslag	D5
William D. Leiber	D7	Charles D. Gordon	D5
Larry E. Myers	D7	Douglas R. Kleffner	D5
Lonn M. Stockton	D7	Janice L. Binger	D6
Roy D. Umstattd	D7	Elmer J. Amos	D6
Leo Cologna	D8	Dale R. Daniels	D7
Jackie D. Jenkins	D10	Leslie A. Jones	D7
David E. Woodside	CO	Jessie C. Fulton	D10
Michael R. Kratzer	CO	10 Years	
Robert J. Massman	CO	Howard L. Bailey	D1
20 Years		Karla R. Hawk	D1
Deborah E. Gregory	D1	Jerry L. Anderson	D2
Tammy K. Meneely	D2	James A. Long	D2
Carl D. Pennington	D2	Dennis Calton	D4
Larry D. Leathers	D2	James D. Reavis	D4
Keith E. Long	D3	Nathan M. Juliana	D4
Kevin G. McGartland	D3	Jennifer L. Becker	D6
		Christopher L. Smith	D6

David M. Teson	D6
Lewis E. Gerbitz	D7
Tara D. Schooley	D7
Joe D. Lakins	D8
Benjamin C. Meredith	D9
Michael R. Holloway	CO
Donielle M. Lawson	CO
Billy J. Rogers	CO
Greg P. Clarkston	CO
Rebecca M. Kyle	CO
Rebecca J. Geyer	CO
Michelle L. Neuner	CO
5 Years	
Johathan D. Kerns	D2
Larry D. Finley	D2
Christopher P. Troesser	D3
R. Daniel P. Lynch	D4
Lawrence R. Johannsen	D4
Jeff A. Lorenz	D5
Kenny L. Johnson	D6
Donald C. Moore	D6
Angela N. Donahue	D6
Jeremy P. Hawkins	D6
Roger A. Brink	D6
Carlos L. Fowler	D6
Thomas C. Nachtweih	D6
Mark O. Knape	D6
Lewis A. Linam	D7
Charolette W. Scott	D8
Brandon D. Shanks	D9
Kurtis G. Cook	D10
James A. Goodrich	CO
Sarah G. Bestgen	CO

May Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Dennis Pollard	D2	35
Charles Smith	D2	32
Teresa Hevel	D3	19
Gordon Camden	D3	9
Alvin Johnson	D3	27
Donald Vance	D3	25
Phyllis Halley	D3	9
Walter Wiercinski	D4	27
Johnnie Johnston	D4	32
Richard Dennis	D4	33
Roger Schwartz	D5	34
Randal Washam	D7	32
Jacqueline Stone	CO	32
Denis Glascock	CO	25

In Memoriam

Retirees		
Grady Gilmore	D10	May 2
Roy R. Nolting	D6	May 5
Chester McBee	D1	May 7
Thomas Haskamp	D5	May 8
Vallie Davis	D6	May 11
William Poush	D1	May 15
Larry Wilbanks	D5	May 17
James Lake	D3	May 18
Luther Harper	D6	May 21
Ronald Blount	D4	May 26
Kenny Miller	D5	May 27
Robert Poyner	D7	May 29



Central Office

Missouri Bridges to be on Center Stage at International Event in 2012

Missouri bridges will be the center of attention next June at the International Bridge Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa. MoDOT has been invited to be the featured agency at the 2012 event. To offer a preview of Missouri's innovative bridge design and construction practices, staff from the Central Office Bridge Division and Customer Relations traveled to Pittsburgh as an exhibitor at the 2011 conference in June.

Work is already under way to plan how the large exhibit space will be used to best feature bridge innovations in

Missouri. Some of the projects that will be showcased are the Christopher S. Bond Missouri River Bridge in Kansas City, the Mississippi River Bridge in St. Louis, the Hurricane Deck Bridge at Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri's Diverging Diamond interchanges and more.

The International Bridge Conference annually attracts more than 1,600 bridge owners and engineers, senior policy makers, government officials, bridge designers, construction executives and suppliers from North America, Europe and Asia. Seminars, technical

sessions and workshops provide registrants with in-depth information and continuing education opportunities on a variety of bridge-related topics.

It is sponsored by the Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania and hosted each year in Pittsburgh, the city of bridges.



Cathy Morrison

Central Office staff had to keep hands off for more than a week while chocolate kisses waited to be shipped to the exhibit space.



Kristi Jamison

Structural Resource Manager Bryan Hartnagel and State Bridge Engineer Dennis Heckman meet with an attendee at the International Bridge Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Employee Appreciation Day



Cathy Morrison

Chekesha Nelson, MoDOT intermediate multimodal operations specialist, promoted Amtrak at Missouri State Employee Appreciation Day on May 26 in Jefferson City. Attendees received a free map and could enter into a contest to win Amtrak tickets.

for more info

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Rail Safety Challenge

Statistics show that approximately one out of four railroad-crossing crashes in the country involve vehicles that require a Commercial Driver License to operate. To address this issue, Operation Lifesaver, Inc., unveiled its Rail Safety for Professional Drivers e-Learning program, with the support of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, MoDOT and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

The Rail Safety Challenge e-Learning program is an interactive experience that puts drivers behind the wheel of a truck for a virtual road trip. It allows drivers to work independently and exposes them to worst-case scenarios that require quick thinking about critical decisions.

The organizations unveiled the program at a press conference on June 9, which is also International Level Crossing Awareness Day.

Administrator of Railroads Rod Massman spoke about the importance of partnerships to bring down injuries and fatalities at railroad crossings.

"MoDOT is proud to work with our partners in the trucking industry, the highway patrol and Missouri Operation Lifesaver in order to promote rail-highway crossing safety and to prevent train-vehicle accidents," said Massman. "The three E's - engineering, enforcement and education - are all equally important in promoting and understanding crossing safety."

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Missouri Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator Rick Mooney speaks at the press conference announcing the Rail Safety for Professional Drivers e-Learning program.

D1

Northwest

Last Month's Events

by M. Elaine Justus



Holly L. Murphy

Nine Northwest District employees took advantage of the May 20 National Ride Your Bike to Work Day. Front row, left to right: Terry Glidewell, Dave Earls, Joyce Reynolds, Mike Mooney, Chris Cole, and Jimmy Becerra. Back row, left to right: Jack Smith, Russ O'Daniell, and John Cool.



Holly L. Murphy

U.S. 136 through the town of Stanberry looking east. When you combine a STIP project to completely re-build a highway from the base up, along with a Safe & Sound bridge replacement, what do you get? Road closure.

Between STIP projects and Safe & Sound bridges, we seem to be impacting the traveling public and whole communities at every turn. One such instance resulted from two projects scheduled for Stanberry. The population of Stanberry is only 1,134 people, but the town sits at the crossroad of two major highways: U.S. 169 and U.S. 136. One of our STIP projects for this year was to re-build U.S. 136 through town. Coincidentally, the bridge over Town Branch on U.S. 136, also inside the city limits, was scheduled for Safe & Sound replacement. By doing them concurrently, we were able to minimize the closure impact.



Holly L. Murphy

U.S. 136 through the town of Stanberry looking west.

for more info

Community Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Elaine Justus
816.387.2353
margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399



Holly L. Murphy

Assistant District Engineer Tony McGaughy presented two dual antenna radar guns to the Holt Police Department on behalf of the Northwest Regional Blueprint Coalition.



M.E. Justus

District Engineer Don Wichern presented two dual antenna radar guns to the Trimble Police Department on behalf of the Northwest Regional Blueprint Coalition.



M.E. Justus

A community briefing about the issues facing MoDOT was held at the Hangar theater in Maryville, Mo., on May 17. District Engineer Don Wichern had an opportunity to share information with the *Maryville Daily Forum*, the *Nodaway News Leader*, and KXCV radio.



M.E. Justus

The community briefing at the Cameron City Council Chambers, held May 18th, attracted the largest number of attendees.

Community briefings were held throughout the month of May in the Northwest District and will continue to be held whenever the opportunity presents itself.

In a short period of time, we were able to reach a considerable number of people with the facts of MoDOT's financial future. Consistently, people applauded MoDOT's willingness to make the hard decision to re-assign and cut personnel. They were especially glad to hear that "boots on the ground" will remain the primary focus of employment at MoDOT. By reducing administration personnel and services to the minimums,

we should be able to "free up" enough money to match Federal funding and continue operations.

By strategically planning community briefings near the major media outlets in the Northwest, we were able to get coverage from EVERY publication, radio station and television station.

As time goes by and more information is known about MoDOT's plans and timeline for reorganization, presentations will continue to be made to county commissions, city representatives, and various organizations.

D2

North Central

Taking the Challenge!

by Tammy Wallace

Last year, then-Systems Management Director Don Hillis led a team



Schuyler Route D receives the minor road challenge treatment developed by the maintenance team.

of maintenance and engineering staff challenging them to think outside the box and come up with a new process to improve the condition of our cold mix minor roads.

The maintenance team, led by Maintenance Superintendents Butch Mundle and Dale Niece, was able to implement the process they developed last year.

The treatment the team chose was to lay cold mix on 10.5 miles of Route D

in Schuyler County using a spray paver, which could lay 300 tons of cold mix per center lane mile.

The team contracted with Missouri Petroleum to provide the spray paver equipment and operators, and another contractor delivered materials. Lancaster maintenance forces handled traffic control, operated the roller and capped the new surface with an asphalt flycoat blotted with cinders. Crews

from the Memphis area assisted with the cinder-blotting work.

Now that the project has been completed, Dale and other MoDOT staff will monitor the results, and in one year the surface will be tested and graded to see how the process held up.

Using innovative ideas and trial processes allows MoDOT to continually strive to get the best value out of every dollar spent.

Safe & Sound on the Move

The Safe & Sound Bridge Program continues to make great progress in north central Missouri. When the program started in 2009, we were looking at 75 bridges to be replaced or rehabilitated. Today, less than two years later, we are down to 18 bridges left to complete the process.



Above, Route P in Chariton County under construction. Below, celebrating the completion.



With 57 bridges completed, seven under construction and 11 left to go, we are on schedule to have the bulk of the program completed by the end of the year.

Safe & Sound Field Engineer Preston Kramer has greatly enjoyed overseeing the program for the district. "From the

beginning of the program in 2009, all staff in the district have been great to work with," said Kramer. Everyone in construction, maintenance, traffic and right of way is always willing to do whatever it takes to meet our goals."

Kramer said the average completion time on the bridges has been 45 days, with the quickest completion in just 22 days.

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A Little More Complex

A project to improve sight distance at U.S. 65 and Route WW in Carroll County became a little more complex

and support the new pavement. To do the stabilization, a polymer material was injected into the sub-



Uretek, Inc. from Michigan performed the process, moving quickly to get the road opened to traffic.

grade. "This injection method is the quickest way to get stabilization, but it is a specialized process that not many contractors are able to perform," said Construction Engineer Dennis Brucks. "This non-destructive method of stabilization was less costly than removing the new pavement," he added.

than originally planned. The work involved removing the existing pavement through the intersection and reconstructing it at a lower grade, which would remove an existing hump in the roadway improving sight distance.

The contractor encountered problems with high moisture content under the old roadway, causing additional unexpected work to stabilize the subgrade

The concept for the improvements began last year when State Representative Mike Lair brought the issue to the attention of District Engineer Dan Niece.

Even though more work was involved than originally expected, the outcome was the same; a safety improvement that was greatly appreciated by the community.

Haydite Seals Underway

by Anthony Zuccarini

One of the first Haydite seals of the season was recently completed when four maintenance sheds combined efforts to seal a 13-mile section of U.S. 24 in Randolph County.

According to Maintenance Superintendent Kent Bohon, haydite was used for the seal. "This is a lighter material that keeps rock chips down on vehicles," Kent said. "Plus, it allows for us to apply a thicker seal for treatment as opposed to using cinders."

Overall, the project was very successful. "I drove over it and it looks really good," Bohon added. "I would like to say thank you to Keith Hartwig's area for their help."



Other maintenance crews working on the project included Moberly, Macon, New Cambria and Atlanta.

Striping Crews Rocket Ahead

Earlier this spring, during a Tracker meeting, Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Travis Wombwell was pleased to report that our major roads striping program was completed three weeks ahead of schedule.

The original goal was to have 1,400 line miles of our major roads striped by Memorial Day. By changing the way we normally do our striping process, we were able to accomplish this goal three weeks early. The crews then moved to I-70 assisting the central district with their striping efforts.

"We began running one striper with two crews working split shifts,"

said Wombwell. One crew worked Monday through Thursday, while the other crew worked Wednesday through Saturday. Wombwell added this was the first year we have had the striping done on our major roads this early in the season.

Great job!



D3

Northeast

A Four-Time Celebration

The Northeast District celebrated the completion of four bridges on its Safe & Sound Bridge Program last month by holding its first ribbon-cutting ceremony of the year. With the help of Ralls County Commissioners, MoDOT employees, the contractor and other dignitaries, the celebration was held near

the most recently completed bridge on MO 19 south of Perry near Mark Twain Lake. The four bridges finished this year included Route P, which was the first bridge to go under construction this year, Route 154, Route J and MO 19. The four bridges averaged 44 days for completion, all before Memorial Day.



Several dignitaries, MoDOT employees, the contractor and other officials participated in the ceremonial “removing of the puzzle pieces” on the Northeast District Safe & Sound Bridge Program banner, as well as the ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of four bridges in Ralls County already this year.

Teamwork, Scenarios Keep Everyone On Their Toes

It might have been just a drill, yet Northeast District employees took the fabricated earthquake event very seriously. “We included as many people as we could using the incident command model, as well as coming up with several unique scenarios to keep everyone on their toes,” said Maintenance Traffic Engineer Mark Giessinger, who served as incident commander during the earthquake exercise in May. One of these scenarios, which was the brainchild of Jason Shafer, assistant maintenance and traffic engineer, included a major river bridge collapsing onto a coal barge and catching fire. Also during the exercise, New Florence Maintenance Supervisor Dion Thurman discovered a large beehive while inspecting a bridge on I-70. A press conference was held with the City of Hannibal, the public school system, the hospital and MoDOT at the joint information center in Hannibal. Overall, Giessinger felt like the drill helped prepare officials in the area in the event of an actual earthquake.



Life over the fast lanes... While performing inspections under the High Hill overpass on I-70 during the earthquake exercise, Dion Thurman and Clint Ford discovered some new “home builders”...a beehive. “If you look closely, you can see a couple of the construction workers taking a break at the entrance to the hole of their concrete kingdom,” Thurman said.

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Truck Parking Only At Mineola

Both Mineola Rest Areas along I-70 in Montgomery County have begun the conversion to truck parking only facilities. The decision about the conversion was made after determining it was not feasible to bring the rest area up to environmental compliance. According to Motor Carriers, commercial vehicles are very happy with the decision, and both east and west bound facilities are already in use. It will take the remainder of this year to complete the conversion, and an additional 17 parking spaces will be available when complete.



Around the District



The emergency operations center was a hub of activity during the earthquake exercise held in May. Pictured in action is Jason Shafer, Nathan Briggs, Holly Thronson, Mary Wilson and Andrea Bland.



Matt Golian from Hannibal maintenance and Janet Groenda (pictured) from the Work Life Center recently participated in New London Elementary School’s career fair. In addition to safety information, Janet and Matt asked each student what she wanted to be when she grew up. The most popular answer? A MoDOT worker ... go figure!



Tom Batenhorst, district design engineer, helps with Employee Recognition Week by doling out popcorn for employees. The District’s Children’s Christmas Committee held the fundraiser and the proceeds of nearly \$230 went to help Joplin.

D4

Kansas City Area

D4 2011 Run for the Wall Rides Through Missouri

by Michele Compton

The 2011 Run for the Wall motorcycle rally rode through Missouri in May and our Lafayette County staff and Motorist Assist were on hand to help the riders make it safely accross the state.

The philosophy behind the ride is to “ maintain a safe, supportive and private atmosphere in which all participants can reflect and heal on their journey to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. in the hope

that they can return home to a new beginning.”

As the they progressed East, they made stops at memorials, Veteran’s hospitals and schools.

Thanks to Ron Cordes, Maintenance Superintendent; Rusty James, Incident Management Coordinator; Scott Banes, Motorist Assist Supervisor and Rob Johnson, Motorist Assist Operator.



Bond Bridge Light Show to Accompany Fireworks Spectacular

Demolition of the I-29/35 Paseo Bridge over the Missouri River is nearly complete and will conclude shortly after the now swollen river recedes to its normal levels. In the meantime, MoDOT will debut the Christopher S. Bond Bridge’s new lighting system. A patriotic light show will accompany KCRiverFest 2011’s fireworks extravaganza Sunday, July 3 in Richard L. Berkley Riverfront Park.

“Lighting up the new Bond Bridge for over 30,000 friends gathered in the park to celebrate Independence Day is what it’s all about,” said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. “This is another way for MoDOT to thank the people of Kansas City for enduring a three-year road project in the heart of our city.” MoDOT and its contractor, Paseo Cor-

ridor Constructors, delivered an early Christmas present in December 2010 by opening all ramps and lanes of Interstate 29/35 six months ahead of schedule and on budget.

The Christopher S. Bond Bridge features a unique lighting system located along the outer edges of the structure’s main support beams. A series of interconnected color-changing panels (106 in total) can display thousands of colors in a variety of patterns. “Nine lighting packages were created with community input to mark Kansas City’s changing seasons, holidays and regional events,” said Kidwell. “People can re-experience the bridge in a different way each time we turn on a new show.”

Award-Winning Project



The Christopher S. Bond Bridge has received top “New Bridge” honors from the Structural Engineers Association of Kansas and Missouri and the Structural Engineers Association of Illinois.

kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell and Parsons Principal Bridge Engineer Thad Kosmicki with the 2011 SEAKM “New Bridge” Award for Engineering Excellence. The award was presented in April at SEAKM’s Annual Meeting held in Wichita, Kan.

Team MoDOT Pours Out Aid for Joplin

by Michele Compton

When the need was there, D4 responded. An initial call for supplies was met with an outpouring of items including gently worn clothes. For Joplin residents, the simple necessities, such as toilet paper and deodorant, became an urgent need.

We collected a truckload full of items, mainly hygiene products, clothes, some food, water, paper products and toys for kids and dropped off the donations at the Harley Dealership, Cycle Connection in Joplin.

“We wanted to choose an organization that would take all of our donations, so our crews did not have to drive all over

Joplin passing them out to groups,” said Melanie Lanigan, Sr. Administrative Technician, who helped coordinate the effort.



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D5

Central

Diverging Diamond Interchange Part of Route 740 Improvements

By the end of next year, Central Missouri could see its first diverging diamond interchange under construction in the city of Columbia.

The innovative design is part of a roadway widening and modification project of Route 740 (Stadium Boulevard) in the city of Columbia. MoDOT held a public hearing for the project on May 24, and more than 60 people came to learn more about the improvements.

In addition to the diverging diamond interchange, which will be located at Stadium Blvd. and Interstate 70, plans include widening Stadium Blvd. from

I-70 to south of Broadway. This portion of Stadium is a high-traffic area that contains a busy retail area and provides a connection to the University of Missouri.

The project also includes adding lanes to Fairview Road,

from Worley Avenue north to the west entrance of the Columbia Mall, and to Bernadette Drive from Fairview Road to Beverly Drive.

The work is being done to improve safety and traffic flow through the area. The diverging diamond interchange was first used in Springfield, Mo. The design is financially appealing because it uses existing lane space without requiring new land or additional bridge structures.



Area Engineer Mike Schupp and Transportation Project Manager Nicole Hood review plans with community members during the May 24 public hearing.

Work on the Stadium corridor is scheduled to begin in 2011 and will last through 2014. The improvements will cost approximately \$20 million and are funded by MoDOT, the City of Columbia, and three transportation development districts.



Motorists traveling on Stadium would cross over to the opposite side of the road at the first traffic signal. After driving over I-70, they can either turn left to access I-70 or travel through the second signal to cross back over and continue on Stadium. Motorists entering the on ramps from each direction must merge with traffic before reaching the interstate.

District Employees Assist with Joplin Tornado Recovery

by Holly Dentner

Sometimes the weather, or an incident, or even an emergency situation will send MoDOT employees across district borders to help one another get the job done. After the tornado struck Joplin in late May, the Central District was ready to assist as needed.

The first crew to travel to Joplin was a group of seven signal shop employees. They spent four days rebuilding a signalized intersection from the ground up.

“I’m not even sure of the street names for the intersection where we worked,” said Senior Electrician Randy Vandeli-
cht. “All the street signs were gone. We placed the temporary signals on poles and span wire so that traffic could start moving through the area.”

Another group of district employees went to Joplin during several weeks in June to assist the City of Joplin and the Army Corps of Engineers.

“In order for the Corps to haul away debris, a property owner had to fill out a Right of Entry form,” said Senior Traffic Technician Dianna Johnson. “It was a very moving experience to be face-to-face with people who had lost everything, and hopefully we helped them move through this step in the process.”

Johnson said sometimes the people just needed someone to talk to.

“Several people sat down and told me their stories,” said Johnson. “I saw a

range of emotion, from anger to acceptance. When I toured the damaged area, I understood why.”

While MoDOT is not involved in cleaning up debris, volunteers went to help facilitate the work. Two teams of employees from around the state worked 12-hour days, some even going out in the field to find property owners who might be eligible.



Senior Traffic Technician Dianna Johnson, Senior Human Resources Technician Kim Rutherford, and Senior Office Assistant Edith Walton assisted residents with the paperwork necessary to remove debris from their property.

District Applies Cinder and Chip Seals to Protect Low-Volume Routes

by Holly Dentner

MoDOT takes advantage of the warm summer months to preserve the condition of lower-volume state routes. One option we use to extend the life of a roadway is to apply a cinder or chip seal, which preserves and protects the asphalt surface.

“Sealing pavement is a cost-effective way to prolong the lifespan of a roadway surface when it begins to show signs of wear and tear,” said Maintenance Superintendent Mike Belt. “The cinder or chip seal prevents water from penetrating the roadway surface and softening the rock base, which can cause ruts and cracking and would lead to even more damage.”

During the sealing operation, crews apply a layer of liquid asphalt to the roadway and then apply either a layer of cinders or limestone aggregate.

The cinders or aggregate provide friction and keep vehicle tires from coming in contact with the liquid asphalt before it cures.

“The limestone aggregate looks like loose gravel, and we use it when the road is already showing some wear and tear,” said Belt. “More cracks in the roadway means we need to use

more liquid asphalt to fill them. The aggregate provides a better layer of protection for vehicles driving over the thicker layer of liquid.”

Motorists driving through a fresh cinder seal or chip seal should expect to encounter loose material on the roadway for the first few days. After the seal coat has cured, crews go back through the area and sweep up any remaining loose material.

“Motorists should drive very carefully through a fresh cinder or chip seal,”



Crews from the Gasconade, Maries, and Osage Counties placed a cinder seal on Route 133 in Osage County.

said Belt. “They should lower their speed, use extra caution, and watch for signing that indicates loose gravel.”

MoDOT has already applied cinder seals in Boone, Cole, and Osage Counties in June. Crews will apply cinder seals on several routes in Callaway, Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties in the next two months. In August, Route Y in Cooper and Moniteau Counties and Route JJ in Morgan County will receive chip seals.

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D6

St. Louis Area

I-55 Milestone in Jefferson County Completed as Promised

by Jack Wang



Local elected officials and some MoDOT North Jefferson area team members cut the ribbon to mark the completion of the I-55 Widening project.

Residents of Jefferson County recently celebrated the opening of a third lane in each direction on Interstate 55 at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in May. The event was held at the old weigh scale location located south of the I-55 and Route M interchange on Metropolitan Boulevard.

The Interstate 55 widening project was funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It widened Interstate 55 by adding one lane between Route M and Route Z. The new improvements will ease congestion and improve safety on this

major highway.

“The new features, including the additional third lane, inside shoulder and new safer off-ramps on I-55 to Route M are now straight instead of curvy. These improvements will provide a safer route for Jefferson County motorists,” said MoDOT North Jefferson County Area Engineer Kristy Yates.

She added, “We have new high-tension guard cables on our highway now, so that is going to keep those cross over accidents from happening. We’re really excited about this project.”

Two bridges on I-55 over Route M and Glaize Creek were also replaced as part of this \$15 million project.

Third District Congressman Russ Carnahan recognized that not only did the widening project add a third lane and much needed safety improvements, it also produced other benefits.

“With the recovery act dollars that came



Kristy Yates, MoDOT's North Jefferson Area Engineer, recognized the key stakeholders and their roles in making this widening project a success.

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MoDOT Teams Supports Komen Race for the Cure

by Kara Price

Several MoDOT employees, known as the Road Warriors team, supported the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure held in downtown St. Louis in early June. This is an annual fundraising event that attracts thousands of people to St. Louis to raise money in finding a cure for breast cancer.

The Road Warriors participated in the race wearing pink hard-hats in honor of the Komen race and breast cancer awareness. They helped raise more

than \$1,000 contributing to the cause.

“This was my first time participating in the Komen race and it was an unbelievable experience,” said Kelly Pogulis, a paralegal in District 6. “It was emotional, especially as a survivor, and seeing the sea of pink was amazing.”

The team says they hope to have even more participation from employees and their families next year.



MoDOT's Road Warriors team wore pink hard hats to show their support for the Komen Race for the Cure.



Lisa Orf (left), Central Office Intermediate Paralegal, and Kelly Pogulis (right), District 6 Paralegal and a survivor, were excited about walking the race. Their separate team raised more than \$10,000.

here, and they came here to do a job. They came here to create jobs and they did that well,” said Congressman Carnahan.

He added, “This project was a success with the contractors and the workers on the ground who made this happen. My hat’s off to MoDOT for putting this money to work to do what it was supposed to do; to create jobs, to build our infrastructure, to make it safer, to save lives and to help the economy grow.”

With no change in sight in the near future for highway funding, and the new Bolder Five-Year Direction for MoDOT, Missourians may not see more major interstate improvements anytime soon.

“The cooperative effort that we have in Jefferson County is something that we value, and that’s a commitment that we’re going to keep, regardless of how much money MoDOT has to work with,” said MoDOT St. Louis District Engineer Ed Hassinger.

He added, “I can assure you that we’re going to spend it in the most efficient way possible. We’d love to have more of it, but that reality is not in our control, so we’re going to do the best job with every dollar that we get, putting the most stuff on the ground that we can.”

D7

Southwest

Voices from the Storm

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

Joplin was once a town known as easy to get around.

That all changed the evening of May 22 when an EF-5 tornado ripped through the center of Joplin. Gone are the road signs. Gone is the orange Home Depot store on Range Line Road. A cross stands amid the rubble of St. Paul's United Methodist Church. The nine-story St. John's Hospital is now an empty shell. Getting lost in the small town of Duquesne, once rare, is now commonplace.

Joplin's business and medical districts were decimated, as were hundreds of homes.

With the massive amounts of destruction in Joplin, it's amazing an organization as large as MoDOT didn't lose even one employee.

Everyone has a story to tell. Here are a few from our employees:

Marsha Tarrant

Senior General Services Technician

My personal experience was difficult but most rewarding. The first day my co-worker Janet Doty and I delivered food to the crews was on Tuesday after the tornado. I was like everyone else trying to stay strong and use my anxious energy to help someone, instead of needing help.

At that time a family member was missing, and I had not yet seen the devastation. As Janet and I started out on our journey we realized we were not going anywhere quickly. Signals were out and traffic was being directed at every intersection. Not moving in your vehicle gives you a lot of time to observe the devastation. As we were getting close to our first group of employees, I realized when I looked to my left, the apartments where my missing family member lived were leveled. I was in no condition to drive and Janet had to get us where we needed to go. We regrouped and marched on.

As we found our crews, we talked to them, asked how they were doing, served them food and just comforted

each other. It felt rewarding to do something to help, even through all our own pain.

Mari Heeter

Senior Right of Way Specialist

My life was shattered shortly after 5:41 p.m. on May 22. How was I to know that everywhere I had been just an hour before would soon be gone?

I was home when I heard the sound of distant rumbling thunder that didn't stop and was rapidly approaching. I knew it was coming from the west, but didn't immediately recognize what it was. I didn't have the television or radio on. I was preparing for the next day at work and planning to watch the finale of "The Apprentice," a Sunday night staple.

I never got to watch the finale. I would never go home to that house again. I was in a world that left my ears ringing, my heart racing and my sanity shaken to the core. I became a refugee in 45 seconds.



The shell is all that's left of Mari Heeter's house.

I found myself in the middle of my street, stunned at what I was seeing. Everything looked like Pickup Sticks. Everyone's face had the same expression: horrified. I looked up and saw my dear friend Pete walking rapidly toward me, yelling my name. I broke right there, someone I loved came to rescue me from this instant nightmare.

Exhausted and in shock, I borrowed



From left to right, Debbie, John, Jr., Whitney and John Lacey can't contain their emotions when their rebuilt house is revealed.

boots too big for my feet and put on the only pair of jeans I had in my possession. Family and friends began showing up, even as far away as Kansas City, to check on my well being and to help. I was well taken care of.

Later my brother, Crockett, was in the back yard working with a church group from Springfield. He approached me to tell me of a teenage girl who was weeping in my back yard. He thought I should talk to her as she was upset because he was telling the story of how he and his wife, his son Myles, and Myles' girlfriend made it to my house the night of the tornado to look for me. They saw my car in the garage and found my purse and car keys. Crockett just knew I was in the house. He and Myles threw hundreds of pounds of roofing and debris around looking for me in every

They called every other day to check on me. Tara's mother told me she spoke of me with her friends and told them about my experience. She asked if she could host a "Mari Survived the Tornado" shower for me, and she wanted to invite people I never met who wanted to do something for me. They asked me to sign up for a gift registry. I was humbled beyond belief, and accepted with a gracious heart.

Four weeks after the tornado hit, I was with my new friends and enjoying their hospitality. Who knew something so good would come out of something so bad? I learned people are good. People are caring and God is in our hearts and in our acts and deeds. I will forever be humbled by the experience of the EF-5 tornado that ravaged Joplin, and I will be a stronger and better person because of it.

John Lacey

Retiree

John and Debbie Lacey's home sustained major damage during the storm. They were sent away for a week so that "unskilled volunteers" could roof their house for them. Unbeknownst to them, volunteers with Operation Blessing gutted their house to the studs and rebuilt it in a week. Their new house was revealed to them June 14.

"I thought we'd have to live in a tent the rest of our lives," Debbie Lacey said. "Look at this! It's a brand-new house!"

The new house came with new furnishings, a shop with a zero-turn radius mower and a treehouse for their twin grandsons. Some of the work on the treehouse was done by Joey Logano, driver of the #20 Home Depot Toyota, and his race team.

Looking around at the work of complete strangers, John couldn't stop the tears from falling.

"This is just amazing. I'm speechless."

Note: There are so many amazing photos, videos and stories shared by survivors and witnesses. For more information, go to the Facebook page called "D7 Joplin," a group formed to share information after the storm.

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I don't think I will ever get over the guilt of knowing my brother was not giving up on me and I wasn't there to tell him I was OK. The ironic thing is when I was trapped in my closet, I cried out over and over again, "Crockett, come and save me."

D8

Springfield Area

'Bridge Jacking' Speeds Up I-44 Bridge Rehab Project

by Bob Edwards

Replacing the deck on the westbound I-44 bridge over the Gasconade River required head-to-head traffic for only 19 days because of a new-to-Missouri "bridge jacking" construction technique.

More traditional methods would have disrupted traffic east of Lebanon for 60 to 90 days and made it impossible to get the project done before the Memorial Day holiday weekend when I-44 traffic increases for the summer.



Ox Blue

Looking west during bridge move

Employee Honored For Response To Crash

by Angela Eden

For quickly coming to the aid of two people involved in a crash on I-44 in April, Incident Response Maintenance Crew Leader Doug Foley received MoDOT's Certificate of Appreciation.



Foley

Foley was driving west on I-44 on his way to repair a section of median guard cable when he saw a car ahead of him drive into the cable between Strafford and Springfield. He immediately stopped his incident response truck in the left lane, turned on the emergency lights to move traffic away from the crash and rushed up to the car.

The passenger got out but the driver was trapped, so Foley stayed with her. He checked for injuries and shock until first responders arrived. As it turned out, the driver was not seriously hurt.

"His demeanor throughout the ordeal was calming, professional and safety-oriented," the crash victims said in a letter to then-District Engineer Kirk Juranas.

A new 670-foot long bridge deck with underlying girders attached was built next to the existing bridge. Hydraulic jacks were used to slide the new superstructure into place in one piece during a 10-hour operation on one day.

"When you think about moving 4 million pounds with 65-ton jacks, that's impressive," said Rolla Resident Engineer Vickie Woods, whose office inspected the project.

The process, employed elsewhere in the United States and in other countries, will be used again in Missouri later this year to rehabilitate a Route 5 bridge over the Lake of the Ozarks.

Prime contractor Emery Sapp and Sons of Columbia recruited an engineering firm to design a temporary substructure and plan its move. Emery Sapp brought in another subcontractor specializing in the hoisting and transporting of heavy objects to do the bridge jacking itself.

"Sliders" – stainless plates 2 feet wide and 10 feet long – were placed continuously on top of the existing bridge's columns and underneath the new superstructure during construction. Teflon bearing pads were attached to the bottom of the new girders.

Seven hydraulic, "push-pull" jacks, powered by diesel generators, were set up, one jack on each of the new columns. The jacks "pushed" the new superstructure and then "pulled" themselves up to make next push. As a lubricant, dishwashing liquid was poured on the sliders ahead of each push.

The bridge jacking process began at 9 a.m. and ended at 7 p.m. on May 16. The new superstructure was moved 3 feet at a time because of the 3-foot stroke of the jacks. Each 3-foot shift took about one minute.

In the end, Emery Sapp opened the westbound bridge 16 days ahead of schedule, earning the maximum bonus of \$600,000.

District 8 Traffic Engineer Joe Rickman said the project caused minimal traffic backups. "We ended up with a great end product."



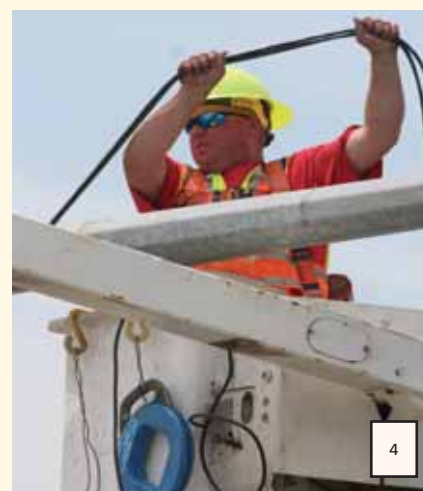
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D8 at Work

1. Republic Maintenance seals a bridge deck on Greene County Route D east of Springfield, with Regional Maintenance Supervisor Bret Hicks spraying and Maintenance Crew Leader Michael Douty, left, and Intermediate Crew Worker Paul Hyde spreading sealant.

Working in Joplin in the aftermath of the May 22 tornado:

2. Connecting a new signal controller box are Traffic Operations Engineer Leo Cologna, right, with District 5 Signal Shop Senior Electrician Randy Vandelicht, left, and Electrician Rich Bearden.

3. Removing debris is Branson Senior Maintenance Worker Billie Torner.

4. Pulling electrical wires to hook up new traffic signal heads is Signal Shop Senior Electrician Eric Bowers.

5. Distributing dust masks, safety goggles and other supplies before maintenance crews head to Joplin are, from left, General Services Manager Brad Leonard, Dora Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Shipley, Maintenance Operations Superintendent Dan Ream and District Safety and Health Manager Gary McLarry.

D9

South Central

I-44 Project a Success

Construction was recently completed on a project rehabilitating 10 miles of pavement on the westbound lanes of Interstate 44 in Pulaski County. The replacement of the bridge deck and steel girders on the Gasconade River Bridge in Laclede County was also included.

According to Resident Engineer Vicki Woods, the project was a success. "We were extremely pleased to be able to complete the paving of this 10-mile stretch of I-44 in only 22 days," said Woods. "The success of this project was a team effort, and I would like to thank the local community for their patience with the various ramp and lane closures.

In addition to the speed of completion, the work zone had very minimal backups and incidents, and the public comments and media coverage were overwhelmingly positive.

The success of the project began several months ago with coordination and planning. A core team was developed with employees from Districts 8 and 9, contractors, and additional staff to work together to develop the plan that would work the best for both motorists and MoDOT.

Congestion was a real concern, as more than 18,000 vehicles per day travel each direction through this section of I-44. To reduce congestion, the team decided to split construction into two stages, utilize strategic ramp closures and to schedule the work in spring.

Splitting the project into two stages, each roughly 5 miles, gave motorists less distance to travel through the work zone and kept key interchanges open throughout the project duration. According to District 9 Project Manager Pete Berry, the closure of ramps was critical. "We determined that a substantial amount of traffic in this area is local traffic which uses the interstate to bypass local roads. By closing some of these ramps, we were able to reduce traffic volumes significantly," said Berry.

Communication on this project started early. MoDOT staff began partnering with Fort Leonard Wood, local city officials and first responders three months prior to the start of construction. These groups were given information on the need for the project, and plans for traffic control, timelines and com-

munications. In addition, a brochure was developed and distributed to local businesses, community groups, trucking companies, tourist destinations and others. A website for the project was created, weekly radio interviews were conducted, and daily updates were sent to interested parties.

Comments from the public, city officials and the media were overwhelmingly positive. St. Robert City Administrator Alan Clark said, "I've got nothing but praise for them on what they've done on this," and St. Robert Planning Administrator said "They've been very attentive to all the questions that we've had. Anything we've asked, they've come back with an answer. Any concerns we've had, they've addressed the situation and made adjustments when necessary or they've come back with an honest answer."

According to Woods, the efforts of MoDOT maintenance and construction personnel were key factors in the success of the project. "Maintenance and construction personnel worked together to maintain

traffic flow throughout construction. A high priority was also given to motorist assist -- employees remained flexible and changed their schedules significantly to accommodate a 24/7 presence on the work zone," said Woods.

Another innovative component of construction was the completion of a new bridge over the Gasconade River in Laclede County. To reduce impacts to the public, the contractor, Emery Sapp and Sons, built the bridge alongside the old one and slid it into place once it had been completed. Watch a time lapse video of the new bridge being slid into place at www.youtube.com/modotvideo#p/u/31/relnppLMLN4.



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D10

Southeast

Marston & Hayti Welcome Centers Open Ceremonies Kick Off Grand Openings

The Southeast District held two ceremonies on May 24 to celebrate the grand opening of the Marston and Hayti Welcome Centers. The first ceremony began at 10:30 a.m. at the Marston Welcome Center at southbound Interstate 55 mile marker 42.4. The second ceremony began at 1 p.m. at the northbound Hayti Welcome Center located on Interstate 55 mile marker 20.2.

The Marston Welcome Center includes a new structure featuring both New Madrid Earthquake and Mississippian culture themes. The Hayti Welcome Center includes a wetlands theme. Both projects were financed through federal enhancement dollars.

The Marston Welcome Center design elements focus on the rich Native American Indian culture as well as incorporating elements surrounding the 1811 New Madrid Earthquake. Unique artistic elements have been integrated throughout the building and site, which speaks to the convergence of the two cultures that are at the core of history of the Bootheel region. From the contemporary arrowhead sculptures to the Richter Scale column lights to the map illustrating the devastating effects of the earthquake and its epicenter, the welcome center will educate visitors on the history of southeast Missouri for years to come.

The Hayti Welcome Center, located in Pemiscot County, includes a wetlands theme. Interpretive design elements, incorporated throughout the building and site, highlight the unique history of Hayti and the wetland ecology of the

flood plains of the Mississippi River. Visitors are welcomed by sculptures based on the historic dredges that helped create levees and drained the swamps. A walking trail depicts the early “pole roads” or plank paths that were built on top of the wetlands. A map of Pemiscot County and the Mississippi River greets the public in the foyer of the welcome center. Upon entering the building, guests are greeted by another ceramic tile mural of early Bootheel history.



Hayti Welcome Center ribbon-cutting ceremony

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission awarded an \$11,629,285 contract in July 2009 to R. L. Persons Construction Inc. Both projects included construction of the welcome centers, grading, paving, drainage work, lighting, landscaping and signing.

“Both locations feature restroom facilities, picnic areas, a playground, benches and walking trails,” said Resident Engineer Brian Holt.

As the ceremonies concluded, visitors and families had already begun utilizing the picnic areas, restrooms and play ground areas.

Videos and photos from the ceremonies are available on the Special Events webpage at www.modot.org/southeast/.



Former Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Duane Michie cuts the ribbon at the Marston Welcome Center ceremony.

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Proactive Drainage Work Helps During Flood

The residents of Coldwater appreciated the efforts of MoDOT’s crews, and Darren Coley took time to share their thoughts. Please see an excerpt from the letter below.



Route 67 at Wappapello during flood

Our state department doesn’t always get enough thanks, but the people that live along Cedar Creek in Coldwater next to the creek and bridge on the old highway 67 can’t say thanks enough. In the fall of 2010, you came

and cleaned out from underneath the bridge for us. If you had not done that we would have been flooded. We had about 15 inches here in Coldwater over the last week and a half in April.

Southeast Receives Thanks for Flood Efforts

The Catron Volunteer Fire Department took time to thank Southeast crews for their efforts and hardwork during the flood. Please see the letter below.

As members of the Catron Volunteer Fire Department, we would all like to thank you for your hard work and dedication to the citizens of New Madrid County during the flooding that occurred in the recent weeks.

Please know that the efforts of so many of your road crews are truly appreciated. We interacted with your personnel from Malden, Kewanee and Portageville, as their respective areas came together near Catron. They were all professional and courteous to us, and they assisted us in getting the “Road Closed” signs we needed.

We recognize that this flood was a disaster most of us have never seen before, and I hope to never see again. We also thank you for allowing us to assist you, in a very small way, by managing the roadblocks in Catron during that critical week of May 2-6, 2011, when our town became a “dead end” as all routes eastward were closed. We only hope that this may have prevented some motorists from taking unnecessary risks, especially when traveling over water-covered roads at night. Please also know that we are here to help out

in any capacity that you may ask of us. Additionally, the Daily American Republic newspaper included an article praising both MoDOT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their work at Wappapello. Excerpts from the article are included below.

Government entities are always an easy target for criticism - if they had done this, or if they had done that. But there can be no criticism for what happened next.

As soon as the weather forecast cleared and water dropped below the spillway there was immediate action. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is in charge of lake operations, and the Missouri Department of Transportation went right to work.

In no time a bypass around the damaged portion of Highway T was taking shape. The corps began reopening a long abandoned road that would allow access to the Redman Creek boat launch and picnic area.

Miraculously it seemed, all this was completed just days before Memorial Day weekend.

What could have been a major bust for the official start of tourist season wasn’t. But more importantly than that, a community was reunited.

Recent Retiree



Area Engineer Dale Kinneman presents Helen Grindstaff with a plaque for her years of service. Grindstaff retired on June 1 after 20 years with MoDOT. She was a senior maintenance worker.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Employees' Teamwork and Innovation Reach Striping Goal

More Than 20,000 Lane Miles Restriped by Memorial Day

by Linda Wilson

As part of the five-year plan to be more efficient and cut costs, the Missouri Department of Transportation completed restriping 20,765 lane miles of major roads just in time for the kickoff to summer - Memorial Day.

"Visible pavement marking is crucial to motorists' safety," says Don Hillis, MoDOT's assistant chief engineer. "If you can't see the edge of the road, it is harder to stay in the driving lane, especially at night or in rainy conditions."

MoDOT started striping earlier, in March instead of April, and used innovative time management and less equipment to stick to its commitment of keeping roads safe while saving money. The department used just 17 stripers, instead of the former 20, to complete the striping early and give drivers brighter stripes on roads during summer's heavy travel.

"Our employees worked together and flexed their schedules so that the striping machines were running with two 40-hour shifts a week all over the state," said Hillis. "Our employees' innovations showed how to blur the lines of our organization and focus on getting the work done. I'm proud of their accomplishment. This example is what practical operations is all about."

Striping can only be done on clean, dry pavement in temperatures that are above freezing. The stripe includes a combination of paint and reflective glass beads all put down by the same machine. The department has three less stripers this year than last year.

The key to this year's success was in the planning. During the winter



months, district striping supervisors and the regional coordinators were preparing the details of their attack. Paint and bead supplies were ordered. Supervisors worked through schedules on how to keep the stripers working at least 60 to 70 hours per week.

"Most of the districts striping and signing crews were combined to staff the crews. Wherever they could get staff, they did to keep the machines producing," said Jim

Brocksmith, traffic liaison engineer. "The districts hit the task early starting in March and took advantage of every nice day. We had 4,000 lane miles striped by April 1. That's a record to get that much done that early."

Another key to the success was the weekly statewide striping conference call. Districts would report in on progress and request for help as needed. Districts could coordinate the efforts of sharing supplies and spreading crews down certain roads. For example

Macon covered portions of I-70 for the Central District and the St. Louis

District took care of Route 50 through Gasconade County. Brocksmith called it a true team effort.

"Not only did we do it all in less time, but we did it safely," Brocksmith said. "Last year we had a few hit, but this year we had none. That's a huge accomplishment."

As part of the department's new Five-Year Direction, MoDOT is focusing on preserving the existing highway system. More practical operations and cost-saving measures are being implemented in many areas, including signing, striping, mowing and vegetation control, winter operations, and litter control, as well as reductions in personnel, equipment and facilities. The savings from each of these areas will be redirected to achieve the Bolder Five-Year Direction.

